

A new species of *Argyrolobium* (*Leguminosae-Papilionoideae*) from Madagascar

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Summary : Morphological characters support the description of a new species of *Argyrolobium* from Madagascar : *A. itremoense* Du Puy & Labat from the Itremo Massif (Central region).

Résumé : L'étude des caractères morphologiques permet la description d'une nouvelle espèce d'*Argyrolobium* de Madagascar : *A. itremoense* Du Puy & Labat du Massif de l'Itremo (région centrale).

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Prior to completion of an account of the sub-family *Papilionoideae* in Madagascar, a new species is described and illustrated.

Argyrolobium Eckl. & Zeyh., with about 86 species, is one of the largest genera in the tribe *Genisteae* (Adans.) Benth. It is mostly a subtropical genus with many species in South Africa, about 15 in the highlands of tropical Africa and Madagascar, and rather fewer circum-Mediterranean to India (BISBY, 1981). There are 3 species in Madagascar. *A. pedunculare* is very variable in its habit, its indumentum, its leaf form and size, its peduncle length, and its flower and pod size. However, this variation does not appear to correspond to different taxa, but rather to ecotypes varying with the habitat they occupy (woodland to grassland subject to fires or on rocky outcrops), similar variation occurring throughout its range in the Central Plateaux. The two other species are less variable and present a more localised distribution. *A. catati* (Drake) M. Pelt. occurs only in the central area of the Central Plateaux, and the new species, *A. itremoense* is endemic to the Itremo Massif.

***Argyrolobium itremoense* Du Puy & Labat, sp. nov.**

A. itremoense a *A. catati* differt pubescentia uniformiter densa in utraque facie foliolorum et stipulis et bracteis magis evolutis.

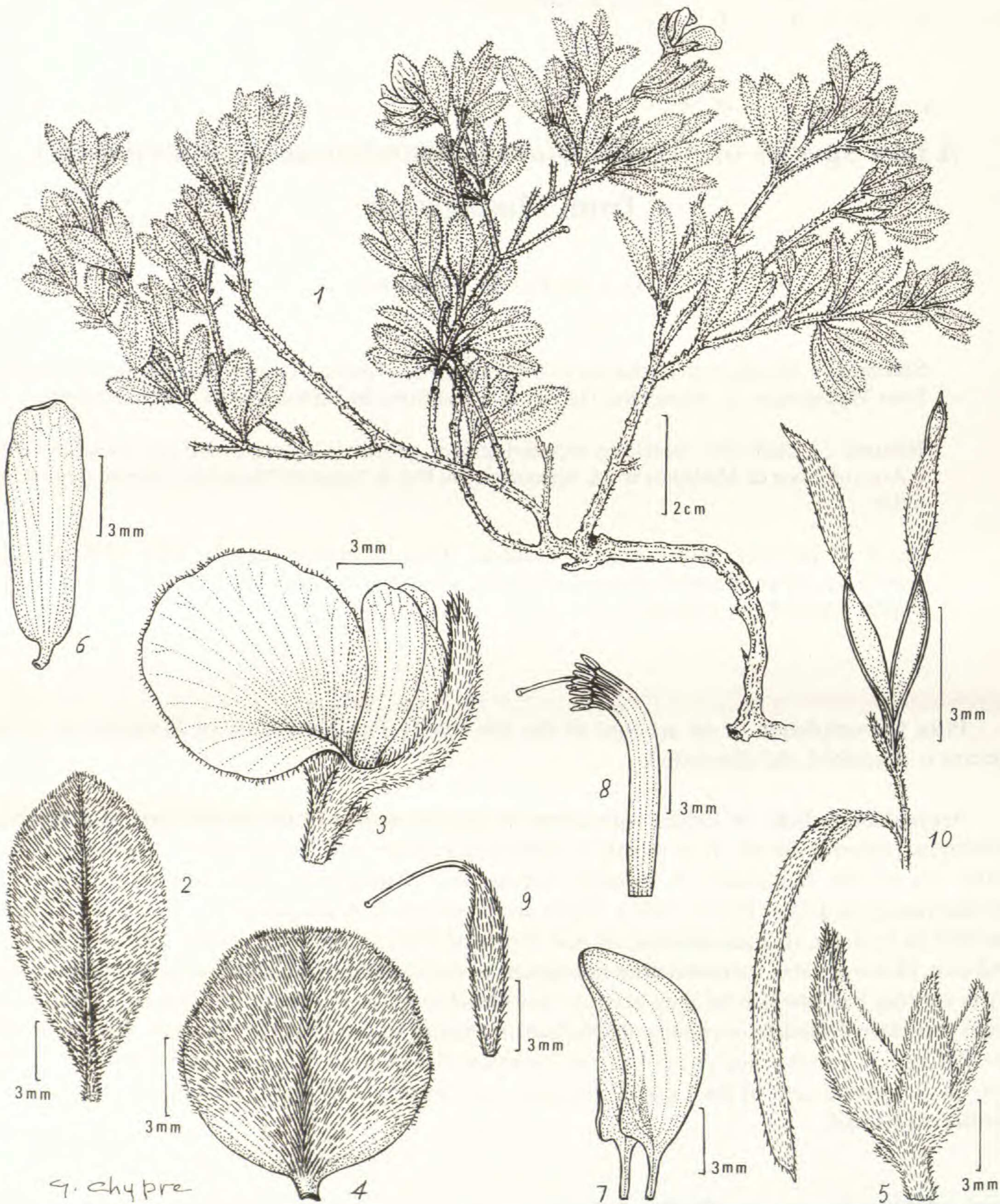


Fig. 1. — *Argyrolobium itremoense* Du Puy & Labat : 1, habit ; 2, leaflet ; 3, flower ; 4, standard petal ; 5, calyx ; 6, wing ; 7, keel ; 8, staminal sheath ; 9, ovary ; 10, pods. (1-2 drawn from *Labat, Du Puy & Andriantiana 2422*, holotype, P ; 3-10 from *Humbert 28326*, P).

TYPE : *J.-N. Labat, D. J. Du Puy & J. Andriantiana 2422*, Province de Fianarantsoa, Ambatofinandrahana, Itremo, Col d'Itremo, 20°34'28" S, 46°34'57" E, 1800 m, 25.XI.1993, fl., fr., (holo-, P ; iso-, K, P, TAN).

A much-branched subshrub, with erect stems from a woody base ; stems tomentose with fulvous hairs when young, but usually becoming silver-grey or whitish. Stipules triangular, long-acuminate, (2)3-6 mm long. Leaves trifoliolate ; petiole 1-5 mm long, tomentose. Leaflets obovate, the terminal leaflets 15-27 × 6-10 mm, larger than the lateral leaflets, tapering at the base, rounded apically, very densely pubescent to tomentose above and beneath, with golden-brown hairs on the young leaves, becoming more silver-grey later, completely obscuring the surface.

Flowers leaf-opposed or terminal, solitary or paired on a peduncle (1)3-18 mm long. Flowers 11-13 mm long, yellow ; bracts oblong, 3-6 mm long ; bracteoles ca. 3 mm long, inserted just below the calyx. Calyx 8-13 mm long, densely rusty-pubescent, very variable in size, the tube short, ca. 2 mm long, the lower lobe 3-toothed, shorter than to as long as the keel, the upper teeth free, oblong-elliptic, acute apically. Standard limb subcircular, 10-15 × 11-16 mm, densely pubescent behind. Wings oblong-obovate, 11-13 mm long, slightly longer than the keel. Ovary pubescent.

Pods linear-oblong, straight, flattened, 42-65 × 4-6 mm, densely pubescent, acute apically, with 10-14 seeds.

PARATYPES : *Humbert 28326*, Montagnes à l'Ouest d'Itremo (Ouest Betsileo), 1500-1700 m, 17-22.I & 18-22.IV.1955, fl., fr. (K, P) ; *30003*, *ibid*, fr. (P).

A. itremoensis differs from *A. catati* in its characteristic uniform, dense, silver-grey pubescence on both surfaces of the leaflets and by its more strongly developed stipules and bracts.

This species is only known from the mountains of the Itremo Massif, Central Madagascar. It occurs in open woody vegetation and on rock outcrops (gneiss, quartz or granite), at 1500-1800 m altitude. Flowering time : November - January (?).

PELTIER also recognised this species as distinct, noting the name *Argyrolobium itremensis* on the *Humbert 28326* specimen.

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